

Dana Jackson

From: escheir@comcast.net
Sent: Tuesday, September 23, 2003 5:19 PM
To: Thomas Chandler
Cc: Marlene Dortch; FCC FCCINFO

CC 98-67

Ms. Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
Tom Chandler, Member of the Commission
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

September 23, 2003

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Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

Dear Ms. Dortch and Mr. Chandler,

As a Deaf customer of the Video Relay Services, there are several issues I would like to bring to your attention. First, with \$17.00 per conversational minute award to any phone provider that do business with individual Video Relay Services such as Communication Services for the Deaf (CSD) of South Dakota with Sprint, I strongly believe profits for CSD making \$15.00 per minute is excessive. This translates to millions of dollars per year into CSD coffers as well as other VRS vendors.

Sign Language interpreters are making between \$48,000 - \$60,000 dollars a year working for VRS Call Centers which is excessive among interpreters salary in the Deaf and Hard of Hearing communities. Most interpreters earn between \$32,000-\$40,000 a year which is the norm. Therefore, in order to trim the costs, I would advise you to reduce the amount of conversational minutes to a reasonable cost, i.e., \$1.00 per conversation minute to VRS Vendors and not to exceed \$2.00 for the phone providers.

Secondly, you have my full support to trim the hours of VRS operations by several vendors. 24 hours is rather excessive and many employees of CSD use USAVRS to call out to make money for their non-profit/profit organization. By eliminating the Spanish Translation VRS is a PLUS! I strongly believe this is a service to provide communication bridges between the Deaf and hearing people, not translating from one language to another. Thank you!

Please instruct all VRS call centers to extend one hour to serve Deaf and Hard of Hearing customers on the West Coast due to Pacific Standard Time zone.

If you have any questions, feel free to email me at: EScheir@comcast.net.

Thank you,

Eric Scheir
Deaf customer

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